

The Mirror

OF

LITERATURE, AMUSEMENT, AND INSTRUCTION.

No. 930.]

SATURDAY, JANUARY 5, 1839.

[PRICE 2d.]



INTERIOR OF THE NEW SYNAGOGUE, GREAT ST. HELEN'S.

THE NEW SYNAGOGUE, GREAT ST. HELEN'S.

THE profound and philosophical Montesque remarks—"All civilized nations dwell in houses; thence the idea naturally arose in the minds of men to build a house for God, in which they might adore Him, and seek Him; both in their fears and their hopes. Nothing, indeed, can be more consoling to the hearts of men, than to assemble in one place, where they all, with one accord, give utterance to those supplications which their wants, and a sense of their weakness, dictate." This observation is subjected to the correction of a divine, who says, "It would be more true, and also more becoming, to state, that the necessity of instructing mankind, of recalling them to a sense of their duties and obligations, and of preaching to them the doctrines of their creed, first gave rise to the idea of building a house for God." Here are the opinions of a philosopher and a divine, respecting the cause which has led mankind to build a house for God. We do not intend to examine the merits of either. Suppose it was revealed and declared to the chosen people of God, as contained in those solemn writings of which they have been the chosen depositories, "Let them make me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them." (Exodus, xxv. 8.) This sets the question at rest, and disposes at once of the opinions of the philosopher and the divine. It was not because the Israelites dwelt in tabernacles; nor because they stood in need of instruction, that a sanctuary was erected; but it was at the express command of God, that manifesting there, as He was wont, the visible symbols of his presence and his power, a standing miracle might declare the uncontrovertible evidence of the truth of their religion and its history. When Jerusalem's lofty temple was laid low, and the plough turned up the holy ground on which it once stood, and the Jews were driven forth a nation "scattered and peeled," his synagogue became to the son of Abraham what his temple had been heretofore. The following are the reflections of a pious Jew on the subject.* "When the Jew enters the portals of the synagogue, the feelings that take possession of him are those of awe and veneration for that invisible Sovereign, whose presence he is permitted to approach. While performing his devotions, he is penetrated with humility and gratitude, and bows with resignation to that just doom, which has exiled him and his fathers from that sanctuary which had been the glory of his nation. His stay in the synagogue is marked by that decorum, which becomes him who stands in the presence of Omnipotence. No idle talk, no mundane ideas interrupt and disturb the

train of his thought, by which he strives to elevate his soul unto contemplation of the Deity. He feels and knows that the place is sacred; and that it is his duty not to violate its sanctity: and though banished, a wanderer, and perhaps despised, his mind is imbued with sacred feelings, analogous to that of those who worshipped of old on Moriah's brow; and the place of his worship becomes to the Jew, though mean in comparison to the temple, the "sanctuary of the Lord."

There are in London about eleven synagogues; the chief one, the German, is in Duke's Place, Houndsditch, in the midst of the Jewish population. The approaches are rather uninviting; but when once reached, the place, the worship, the people, and all the associations connected with their awful and sublime history, more than repay the visit. The Sabbath commences at sunset on Friday, when the synagogue is opened; and again at ten o'clock on Saturday morning. The singing, handed down from the temple-service, and the chanting of the law, said to be the manner in which it was revealed to Moses, is deeply affecting and interesting. The Jews, and the officers in attendance, are most kind and polite to strangers. The interest of the visit is enhanced, by procuring a Jewish prayer-book, with the English translation on the opposite page. Strangers are reminded not to take off their hats as they enter: it is an abomination to the Jews, who worship with their heads covered. Surely no one, on departing from such a scene, but will evince a holy impatience for the return of this people to their own land, and their exaltation amongst the nations; which will be fraught with the most eventful and glorious consequences to the whole world.

The preceding Engraving is a faithful representation of the *Interior* of the New Synagogue,† Great St. Helen's: the ceremony of consecrating this edifice sacred to the Jewish religion, took place on Thursday, September 13, 1838; about 1,000 persons being present. At a few minutes after two o'clock, the chief rabbi (Dr. Hirschel), and the officiating rabbins having taken their places, the consecration anthem was given. The introductory symphony was performed very skillfully by the instrumental band, accompanied by the choruses. The high priest then entered the door of the synagogue, followed by the wardens and other honorary officers of the congregation, carrying the sacred scrolls of the law. The doors having been opened, the chief rabbi and the bearers

† A view of the *Exterior*, with description, will appear in our next number.

‡ The congregation located for several years past in Leadenhall Street, where they had been established about eighty years, and was always known as the "New Synagogue."

entered, and proceeded along the aisle to the ark, which, with respect to the cardinal points and relation to other objects, occupies a position similar to our high altar or communion table. During this time the choristers sung an impressive hymn, and at the conclusion of the chorus the procession proceeded to circumambulate the synagogue seven times, and during each circuit a psalm was chanted by the reader and the congregation with great effect.

When the last circuit was completed, the persons in the procession separated into two lines, one on each side of the ark, when the readers, the principal singers, and chorus, sung a psalm of David; after which the chief rabbi, standing before the ark, delivered, in Hebrew and English, an appropriate address on this occasion, so interesting to the Jewish people; after which the venerable man read a long prayer in behalf of the people of Israel; after which the consecration anthem was given, the words by the late Dr. H. Hirschel (father of the present chief rabbi). Then the secretary read a list of the donations bestowed towards defraying the expense of the synagogue; after this a hymn, composed by Professor Hurwitz, was sung with choruses. This was followed by an impressive prayer for the Queen and royal family, sung by the whole congregation. The finale was a Hallelujah Chorus, which was equally effective. The whole closed by the performance of the afternoon and evening service. On ordinary occasions the daughters of Zion are kept out of view, in the Asiatic fashion, but on this occasion, although the ladies were all in the galleries, yet the ingenuity of the architect has contrived a handsome screen, so tastefully perforated that the fair sex could see clearly all that was passing below, and at the same time those below could easily discover that the Jewish females of our time might vie with those so much admired in ancient times.

The interior of the synagogue is characterized by considerable lightness and loftiness; the height from floor to ceiling of centre nave being 45 feet; the entire length from the entrance to the back of the ark is 72 feet; the extreme width 54 feet; the width of the centre nave 32 feet.

The ark consists of a semi-circular recess and domed head, decorated with Corinthian columns and painted glass windows. This part is designed with especial reference to the Jewish worship, and is intended to form the chief attraction of the interior. The steps, paving, and pedestals are of marble; the latter supporting rich brass candelabra. Light Doric piers and pilasters, in imitation of porphyry and verd antique, sustain an appropriate entablature of light Italian Doric with dentils, the metopes enriched with palmettes and stars alternately, richly gilt; this

order, which goes round the circular part of the ark, sustains a light Corinthian order. The recesses for the law are inclosed with massy circular mahogany doors, and are fitted up in the interior with crimson silk; a rich velvet curtain, with gold fringe, is drawn over and partly conceals the doors and recesses. The Corinthian columns and three-quarter columns are in imitation of Sienna marble; the capitals, white and relieved in gold, with festoons of fruit and flowers, connecting the same; the ornaments of the Corinthian entablature are also enriched in gold; there are three semi-circular windows of richly-painted glass, by Mr. James Nixon; the centre window containing the name JEHOVAH in Hebrew characters, also the tables of the law. The windows are painted with rich arabesques, any sort of figure being inconsistent with the Hebrew worship. On the frieze of the Corinthian order, in large Hebrew characters, is an inscription, importing, "Know in whose presence thou standest!" and on each side of the ark are panels containing a prayer for the Queen and royal family, in Hebrew and in English. The whole composition of the ark, which is 44 feet high by about 25 feet wide, is crowned with a semi-dome, panelled with five rows of octagon panels, with rosettes in each. The ladies' galleries are supported by Portland-stone piers of a novel design, combining strength with lightness; these support a light Doric entablature with a Corinthian order above, of the same description and proportions as decorate the ark, only without the decoration of painting or gilding; above the Corinthian order is a lofty attic, with semicircular windows. All the windows are of ground-glass, with coloured margins and appropriate dressings. The ceiling is divided into 30 central panels, having each a massy flower. At the north end is a semi-circular arch corresponding with that of the south end, in which is a large painted glass fan with rich border, also painted by Nixon.

Between the columns of the ladies' gallery is a rich and light railing of wrought brass work. All the seats throughout the building are of wainscot varnished. There are no pews, as in churches; but benches with lockers. Each seat is numbered, and a moveable flap is provided for the books.

The platform is also of wainscot, and is raised four steps at the four angles, and pedestals supporting four rich brass candelabra, similar to those at the ark; in the front of the platform are the seats of the principal officers of the synagogue. There are no other seats between the platform and the marble steps of the ark.

MAH'S CROSS.

A LEGEND OF LANCASHIRE.

(For the Mirror.)

Come forth,—come forth—ye vassals all,
 Sir William's banner streams afar;
 And rouse you up at honour's call,
 To seek the Holy war.

And on they troop, both squire and knight,
 And serf, and vassal low,
 To dare the Saracen to fight,
 The Infidel to bow.

Weep, Lady Mabel, weep no more,
 In safety soon returning.
 From distant Syria's palmy shore
 The crescent proudly spurning.

Again shall Bradshaigh's banner float,
 Wide waving from the turret high;
 And echo from some haunt remote,
 To his shrill bugle's note reply.

Far o'er the bounding waters bourne,
 They go from Haigh's sequestered bowers,
 Where Lady Mabel long did mourn,
 While slowly crept the lagging hours.

For there no more at dawn of day,
 Did the hoarse stag-hounds bark foretell;
 That wending to the woods away,
 Sir William sought the forest dell.

Nor when still evening's gathering veil,
 Was on the dark old woods reposing,
 Where the sweet night-bird told her tale,
 As the long summer day was closing.

His well-known step no longer falls,
 His stately step no more is seen;
 But round his own ancestral walls,
 The very path-way now is green.

And years pass'd by—from Holy land
 He comes not—came not,—wherefore tell,—
 The bravest of that gallant band.
 They told her that Sir William fell.

And bitterly did Mabel sigh,
 And long the silent tear did flow,
 From her lov'd home condemned to fly,
 Or smile upon Sir William's foe.

Sir Osmund wed, and 'scape the storm,
 That threatened on her house to fall;
 Oh, how unlike the stately form,
 That once was ruler in that Hall!

And she is now Sir Osmund's bride,
 A fearful melancholy thing;
 Seeking her broken peace to hide,
 Her wounded heart's corroding sting.

Her suffering meekly borne, subdued,
 Her alma, her piety, her woe,—
 From vassal and from soldier rude,
 The tear of pity forc'd to flow.

It was a summer holiday,
 Bright on old Haigh the sunbeams shine;
 But Mabel's thoughts are far away,
 With her dead lord, in Palestine.

To 'scape awhile from goading thought,
 She calls the weary wanderer near,
 Her alma the poor and wretched sought,
 And bless'd her bounty with a tear.

Among them stands a Palmer grey,
 Lonely and travel-toll'd was he;
 A wanderer for many a day,
 From regions o'er the billowy sea.

He ask'd not alma, he only pray'd,
 A message for her ear to bring;
 And Mabel, trembling and afraid,
 Saw on his hand a silver ring.

The ring—it was Sir William's token,
 The voice, thrilled to her heart with pain;—
 "Mabel!"—the magic word was spoken,
 "Bradshaigh returns to thee again."

Now from the tower his banner flies,
 And merrily, merrily, peal the bells;
 Away the base one distant flies,
 And gladness in each bosom swells.

And Mabel hailed her banish'd one,
 And smiles were chasing tears away;—
 Still expiation must be done,
 For broken faith, these legends say.

Her peace of mind again to bring,
 To lull remorse, the worst of foes,
 From conscience take its venom'd sting,—
 A daily pilgrimage she goes.

And where yon mouldering cross is seen,
 Still bearing Mab's forgotten name,
 There have her weary footsteps been,
 For daily there the pilgrim came.

Go seek their tomb, an effigy,—
 Of cold grey stone two forms recline;
 Their names alone you there may see,—
 Such dark oblivion waits on time!*

Kirton-Lindsey.

ANNE R.—

Way think that of misfortunes past
 The cark'ring sore will ever last?
 Oh no! when past affliction's hour,
 More softly falls blest hope's sweet show'r;
 Of angry storms the course when run,
 More gaily shines the setting sun.

C. S.

OLD ENGLISH WASSAIL SONG.

In the ancient play of Kyng Johan, recently published by the Camden Society, from a MS. discovered among the municipal papers of the town of Ipswich, the following curious relic occurs. It is probably the oldest Wassail song in our language, and was of course unknown to Ritson, who (Ancient Songs, vol. i. xlvii. edit. 1829.) gives a sort of dissertation on Wassail and drinking songs. Kyng Johan was the production of John Bale, Bishop of Ossory, and the M.S. which is in his autograph, may be referred to the middle of the sixteenth century. The song is as follows:—

Wassayle wassayle, out of the mylke payle,
 Wassayle wassayle, as whyte as my nayle,
 Wassayle wassayle, in snow frost and hayle,
 Wassayle wassayle, with patriche and nayle,
 Wassayle wassayle, that muche doth avayle,
 Wassayle wassayle, that never will fayle.

H. K. B.

* The incidents of the foregoing tale are to be found in an old tradition of Lancashire, which further states, that "Sir William pursued Sir Osmund Neville, and slew him at a place called Newton, in single combat." Returning in safety, he lived with his lady at Haigh Hall to a good old age. They lie buried in the chancel of All Saints, Wigan, where, carved on the tomb, their effigies still exist, the rarest of the monumental antiquities in that ancient edifice. . . . The Lady Mabel's hurt spirit was too sorely wounded to be at rest. For the purpose of what was then deemed an expiation of her unintentional offence, she performed a weekly penance, going barefooted from Haigh, to a place outside the walls at Wigan, where a stone cross was erected, which bears to this day the name of "Mab's Cross."

MOTION AFTER DEATH.

A work of great interest to the medical profession, is about to issue from the press. It consists of a complete course of Lectures on Medicine, by one of the most celebrated physicians and popular lecturers of the metropolis;—Dr. Elliotson. Hitherto his lectures have been known to his professional brethren only through the medium of imperfect reports in the medical journals; but,—thanks to Mr. Butler, the enterprising medical bookseller and publisher,—they are at length about to appear, for the first time, in a dress corresponding with their merit. The editing of the work has been confined to Dr. Rogers;—a gentleman every way qualified to do it justice. Having had an opportunity of inspecting the work in sheets, we have made some extracts, which we think likely to prove of general interest to our readers. The following relate to that malignant pestilence,—Cholera Morbus.

“After death from Cholera, one very remarkable phenomenon presented itself; which was, that the temperature of the body was *higher* than during life. Another very remarkable circumstance, was a twitching of the different muscles of the body, after the person was completely dead. The fingers, the toes, and every part of the face, were seen to move. Observations of this description were made on two persons;—the one a Caffre, and the other a Malay. The former died twenty hours after the first seizure;—the complaint baffling the most powerful remedies. In fifteen minutes after he expired, the fingers of the left hand were observed to move; then the muscles of the left arm were contracted in a convulsive manner; and similar motions were slowly propagated to the muscles of the chest. The muscles of the calves of the legs contracted in like manner; bundles of their fibres being drawn together in a tremulous knot. The muscles of the inside of the lower extremities were forcibly contracted, in a vermicular manner. The muscles of the face and lower jaw were similarly affected; and, finally, those of the right arm, and right side of the chest. These motions increased in extent and activity for ten minutes; after which they gradually declined, and ceased twenty minutes after they began.

“With regard to the Malay, about fifteen minutes after he expired, the toes began to move in various directions; and the feet were made to approach each other. Muscular contractions were speedily propagated upwards, along the limbs; which were turned slowly inward, so as to approach each other, and again outward;—the whole of the lower extremities moving on the heels, as on pivots. These motions proceeded upwards;—producing a quivering in the muscles. In five

minutes the upper limbs began to be similarly affected. The fingers were extended, and often rigidly bent inwards; and pronation and supination of the hand were steadily, though slowly, performed. The same quiverings were observed as in the lower limbs, and extended to the muscles of the chest and back. The muscles of the face moved; and the head was observed to shake. The total duration of these appearances was half an hour. By moving or pricking the arms or limbs, these contractions were rendered stronger, and were again renewed when they had ceased.

“I have noticed the temperature rise before death; and still more after it. I may also mention that, in a case in which there was very great blueness of the skin, no sooner had the patient expired, than the blueness diminished; and, in an hour, there was nothing of the colour to be seen. There was a twitching of the muscles after death; so that one finger would be drawn in, and then another; and the lower jaw would move up and down; and you might see a quivering of the muscles of the lower limbs.”

Our readers will no doubt be reminded, by the foregoing details, of those motions produced in bodies recently dead, by the agency of galvanism. We shall add a few more particulars respecting this fearful disease.

“It was thought, in India, that the natives suffered from it more than the Europeans. Thousands of natives perished near Bombay; while of the Europeans, who had good food, and good clothing, only six were affected. It was found to attack those who had the worst diet, were the worst clothed, and were worst off in all respects. It was found to prevail at all temperatures and all seasons; in *healthy* and in *unhealthy* situations; both in *dry* and in *moist* places. It prevailed in spite of the monsoons; and not only in every direction of the wind, but likewise in all hydrometric states of the atmosphere. There was great doubt whether it was contagious or not. Some thought it proceeded where there was no communication, just as well as where there was. It was found to stop suddenly, without any apparent reason, and then to go on again. It was said to have broken out in the Mauritius, three thousand miles from a place where it had prevailed; but it was after a vessel had arrived from that spot. It turned, at last, towards Europe; and proceeded, pursuing a north-westerly direction, till it reached this country. The particulars observed here and on the Continent, perfectly agree with those observed in India;—namely, that the poor have been affected much more than the rich; and that those who are the worst fed, clothed, and lodged, have all suffered in the greatest degree. We have a striking example of this, when we

contrast its ravages in London, with those it made in Paris. Here the greater part of the people are well-fed;—better fed than in any other part of the world. They eat more flesh; and that flesh is of such a quality, as is scarcely to be found in any other country. Besides this, they are better clothed, and more comfortable; and instead of trashy wines, they have good sound ale and porter, and malt-liquor of all kinds. But in Paris the air is bad; the people have very little water; and the water, for the purposes of consumption, is very bad. The inhabitants are crowded together (I know not how many families in a house) with little ventilation. The streets are narrow; and, together with this, the houses are dirty. The people live on what we, Englishmen, consider to be "trash;" not roast-beef and mutton; but all sorts of dishes made up of bread and vegetables, with a little meat boiled in water to colour it, or to give it a flavour; and they drink, not good beer, but thin wine; and we all know that this disease has committed infinitely greater ravages there, than it has here.

"With regard to the *fatality* of the disease, it was observed, in India, that much good was done by medical treatment. It is said that, at Bombay, there were fifteen thousand nine hundred cases. Of these one thousand two hundred took no medicine; and all died; but where medicine was employed, the deaths were much reduced. With respect to the treatment in this country, I cannot but think that if all the patients had been left alone, the mortality would have been the same as it has been. If all the persons attacked with cholera had been put into warm beds, made comfortable, and left alone,—although many would have died who have been saved,—yet, on the whole, I think the mortality would not have been greater than after all that has been done. No doubt many poor creatures have died uncomfortably, who would have died tranquilly if nothing had been done for them. I tried two or three kinds of treatment. It was found vain to attempt to warm patients by hot air applied *externally*; and I got two of them to *breathe* hot air. I had a tube passed through boiling water; so that they might inhale hot air; but they both died."

We conclude, with a fact for the Temperance-Society. "It was well ascertained in London, that not only those who were badly off, and in bad health from some other disease, but those who were in the habit of drinking spirits, were very liable to the disease. I do not know that such an observation was made in India; but I presume that drunkards suffered there, as well as here. In Europe, however, it is an undoubted fact, that that portion of the lower order who had everything calculated to keep them in good health, but who indulged in spirit-drinking,

were sure to suffer; and this has been observed with regard to other diseases. However well persons may be off, yet if their body be enfeebled by drinking, they are rendered increasingly liable to the disease."

THE ORIGIN OF FINGER-NAPKINS.

From the French.

THE Celts used to wipe their fingers on the bundles of hay which served them for seats; and the Spartans placed on the table, by the side of each guest, a piece of crumb, that he might wipe his fingers thereon. The first finger-napkins that were made in France, were manufactured at Rheims, and presented to Charles VII. on the occasion of his coronation. They did not become common till the reign of Charles Quint; and Montesquieu assures us, that it was but in his time that finger-napkins were brought into general use by the gentry. "Finger-napkins," says Venekelmann, "were not known at Rome; they were not introduced till much later; and then it was the custom for every one to bring his own cloth." "No one," says Martial, "brought a napkin for fear of having it stolen; but, what did Hermogene? He absconded with the table-cloth." Before Rheims manufactured linen napkins, they used to wipe their hands with a sort of worsted cloth. Travellers of the last century, who have visited the country of the Samoyedes, report that the use of cloths and of finger-napkins was unknown to them, also that of handkerchiefs, and that, as a substitute, they always had by them a provision of the scrapings of birch trees, when they ate or perspired; these scrapings were used to wipe themselves with, "and," says Bruin, "they consider it a filthy habit to omit the frequent use of them." M. D. M.

COAL MINES.

Formation, Working, and Ventilation.

SEATED around the bright hearths of England, fed as they are with huge blocks of coal, how few of her merry people trouble themselves to imagine what depths have been delved, what labour has been undergone, what dark places of the earth have been routed and ransacked, to furnish their quiet homesteads with the warmth and blaze of this invaluable commodity. Presuming therefore to guide them through these gloomy abodes, and to acquaint them with the wonders of these subterranean caverns, we shall proceed to show how stratum heaped upon ponderous stratum is perforated by the skillfulness and activity of man, and how, in situations so perilous, that little animated being contrives to live and move, and have his being. Coal is generally found to lie in

seams varying from three to six feet in thickness; these seams consist of different varieties of coal, the two principal of which are the bituminous, or caky coal, and slaty, or coal which does not cake. The bituminous coal moreover generates much greater quantities of carburetted hydrogen than the argillaceous coal. These seams or stratifications, instead of being smooth and continuous, are liable to great dislocations and interruptions. The number and extent of these dikes or slips affect in a great degree the generation of the carburetted hydrogen. In the operation of working the coal, there issues from it a continual sort of hissing noise, especially where it abounds with inflammable gas. The coal on being split is found to be very porous, which is the more easily perceived on its being magnified: in these pores the bitumen is secreted, and in those pores also it is supposed the gas is contained, either in a state of very high compression, or else in a liquid state, which contains a still greater quantity of gas in a smaller bulk. It is generally found that the quantities of gas are in proportion to the size and number of the cavities. The gas emitted in consequence of the porosity of the coal, the slip-dikes, or cracks in the strata act as tubes or pipes to collect and convey the extricated gas to different parts of the coal-field. These divisions of coal have also the name of backs, and these backs form magazines of gas of larger or smaller extent. In these places the coal is more easily separated than the solid coal, for approaching one of these backs, the pressure of the internal gas throws off by its sudden outburst a great portion of the coal adjoining it, but it is far more dangerous to the workmen. Now the grand object of the superintendent of these works, is to preserve the lives and health of the workmen from the dreadful effects of these gaseous disruptions. The most serious attention is therefore to be paid to the proper ventilation of the mines. This is the most important feature of the whole. On this point we shall therefore engage the notice of the reader, and show how the combination of gas and water is overcome by one or two methods of ventilation. The first case gives us proof of a master-mind. The mines in question were more surcharged with gas than any ever known; when the coal was first struck, at a depth of 180 feet, it was highly charged with water, which flow out in all directions immediately. A large river which passed near the coal-pit was crossed by the outburst of the gas. From this the water boiled similarly to that of a steam-engine boiler, and if flame had been put to it would have spread over the river like what is commonly called setting the Thames on fire. If unquenched, a river thus ignited would burn for weeks and months. So terribly was this coal charged with gas,

that no sooner was it struck than it appeared to throw the whole mine into a regular state of mineral fermentation. The gas roared directly it was freed, going off like the report of a pistol, and bursting pieces of coal off the solid wall. The noise which the gas and water made in issuing from the coal was like a hundred thousand snakes hissing at each other. The working of such inflammable mines was no unalarming thing, but its terrors were thus counteracted. Two pits were first sunk, one was called the engine pit, and was employed for lifting up water and drainage: the other for the raising of coal. These pits were united with a headway at the bottom, and a hogshead was placed nearly at the top of the engine pit, with holes bored at the bottom of it. The water lifted up by the engine was then turned into this hogshead: it ran out again as it were from a cullender in all directions about the shaft, and thus created a regular water-blast: the air ascended the engine-shaft with the water, and returned rapidly up the upcast shaft. Having sunk to the bottom of the coal, the next object was to drive a waygate in a right line to the outburst of the coal in the crop: to ventilate it an air-course was cut in the side of the waygate, in the solid coal, about two feet high and about two feet wide, and the front was built up with bricks and mortar very tightly. The fresh air consequently went up the air-course and formed a current over the men; it blew on them, and mixing up with the gas, diluted it sufficiently to prevent its being explosive. At the outburst a little shaft was sunk eight or ten yards deep, and thus the ventilation of this formidable pit was completed. This was, in its day, a very fair expedient, hit upon at the spur of the moment: though it is one which would not suit many other cases. Better organized and more improved systems have now come into use, which we shall examine and explain. There are one or two technicalities which we beforehand elucidate. There are the terms "the upcast" and "the downcast-shaft:" the down-cast shaft is that by which the currents of atmospheric air are introduced into the mine: the upcast-shaft is that by which the vitiated current makes its exit. The "air-course" is a general term, and means that the current of air is circulating: the remaining thing is called "splitting the air" or dividing the current of air, which may be done to any extent. Up to the year 1760 a system was in vogue, which though good in some respects, was very faulty in others. Its great objection was that it ventilated very inadequately the pits, leaving the central part of the works, which was thenceforth called the "dead waste," totally unventilated. This defect has now ceased. The western district is then supposed to discharge so much inflammable air as to

render the circulating current explosive; it is therefore discharged into the upcast-shaft, while the other current passes through the eastern division, which is supposed not to discharge so much inflammable air as to load the circulating current to the firing point, and is carried to the upcast-shaft. Such is the method which is characterized by the latest improvements, and which required no uncommon degree of sagacity and perseverance to finally accomplish and perfectuate.

W. ARCHER.

THE CHINESE MANDARIN & THE CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES.

Translated from the Italian.

IN the early part of the reign of the Emperor Cam-Hi the Great, a mandarin of the city of Canton, hearing a great noise in a neighbouring house, sent to inquire the cause of it, and was informed that the uproar was occasioned by a Dutch chaplain, a Danish missionary, and a jesuit, who were arguing with great vehemence. The mandarin requested the favour of their company, and ordering tea and sweetmeats to be set before them, begged to know the cause of such wrangling, so unbecoming their characters as teachers of religion.

The jesuit replied, that to him, who was always in the right, nothing could be more painful than to argue with persons who were so perverse and obstinate as not to listen to reason; that, at first, he argued with the greatest coolness, but that, finally provoked by their perversity, he had lost all patience. The mandarin gently hinted the necessity of restraining argument by the rules of good breeding; remarked that, in China, men reasoned calmly; and requested to know the subject of their dispute.

"I appeal to your excellency," replied the jesuit;—"these two gentlemen refused to submit to the decision of the Council of Trent."—"I am surprised at that," said the mandarin; and turning to the two refractory disputants, addressed them thus:—"It appears to me, gentlemen, that you ought to respect the opinion of a great assembly; I am quite ignorant of the Council of Trent, but the collective wisdom of many must be superior to that of an individual; nobody should be so presumptuous as to suppose that in his head alone dwells universal wisdom—at least this is what our great Confucius teaches, and if you follow my advice you will submit to the Council of Trent."

The Danish missionary readily admitted the force of the mandarin's reasoning, and informed him that he and the Dutch chaplain had adopted the opinions of various councils held before the Council of Trent.

"Oh! if that is the case," said his excellency, "I beg your pardon,—you may possibly be right."

"Well, then, are you two of the same opinion, and against this poor jesuit?"—"Not at all," exclaimed the Dutchman, "he holds opinions as absurd and extravagant as the jesuit."

"I don't exactly understand you," replied the mandarin, "are you not all three Christians? Have you not come here to teach the Christian religion? How is it that you are not unanimous in your opinions?"—"These two are mortal enemies," said the jesuit, "and yet they agree in opposing me; it is therefore evident, that the one or the other must be wrong, and that I alone am right."—"That does not follow, my friend," returned the mandarin, "it is just possible that all three might be wrong.—I should much like to hear you one by one."

The jesuit delivered a long discourse, during which the other two exhibited, by their gestures, evident symptoms of compassion for his ignorance. The logic of the holy brother was completely thrown away on the good mandarin, who understood it not. After him the Dutchman took up the subject, and was regarded by his adversaries with pity and scorn. His reasoning, which, to himself, appeared as clear as any problem in mathematics, failed to enlighten the darkness of the mandarin's understanding.—The Danish missionary was not more successful.

The three disputants at length spoke together, and loaded each other with abuse. The honest mandarin could hardly pacify them,—he urged the necessity of toleration towards each other's opinions, upon the same principle that it had been extended to all of them by the religion of his country.

After leaving the house of the mandarin, the jesuit met a Dominican friar; he informed him that he had gained the victory, assuring him that truth would always triumph.—"If I had been there," replied the Dominican, "you should not have been victorious: I would have convicted you of falsehood and idolatry." The jesuit retorted, till from words they came to blows. The mandarin, informed of their scandalous proceedings, committed them both to prison. An under-mandarin asked his excellency how long he wished to detain them in confinement?—"Until they agree," was the answer. "Ah! then," said the under-mandarin, "they must remain in prison for life—they never will forgive each other, I know them well."—"Let it be, then," concluded the good mandarin, "until they pretend to be reconciled."

fm.



THE RUINS OF KILCOLMAN,

SPENSER'S RESIDENCE.

"THE Castle of Buttevant, now modernized and fitted up as the residence of Sir John Anderson, is built on a cliff above the river Awbeg, on which the town is situated. On this stream, about four miles further down, are the ruins of Kilcolman, the residence of Edmund Spenser, the poet. Of this truly interesting ruin, in which Spenser composed his "Faerie Queen," and where he received the visits of Sir Walter Raleigh, little now remains, save a single turret, and a few lonely walls upon a little elevation, beneath which flow the neglected waters of the Awbeg, or, as Spenser has named it, the

"Mulla, mine, where waves I whilome taught to weep;"

and where he describes himself as wandering in

"The coolly shade
Of the green alders by the Mulla's shore."

Kilcolman, with its castle, and 3,000 acres of the forfeited Desmond Territory, were conferred on Spenser, by Elizabeth; and here, having married (as he himself described her,) "a country girl of low degree," he continued to reside for near ten years, in compliance with the terms of the grant, which enjoined residence on his estates: this being one of Elizabeth's favourite schemes for tranquilizing Ireland by the location of English settlers. But the turbulent spirit of the Irish regarded little the peaceful pursuits of the gentle poet. In one of these wild commotions, excited by the Earl of Tyrone, his castle was fired by the Irish, and his infant child perished in the flames; when Spenser left Ireland. His name and his reputation seem now alike forgotten amidst the many scenes which he had contributed to immortalize. We sounded several of the peasantry to discover whether they knew anything of the poet, but in vain; the only answer in the af-

firmative was a characteristic one from our postilion, who, in return to our inquiry whether he had ever heard of Spenser, at Kilcolman, replied, "Is it Mr. Spenser, of Kilcolman, your honour? Troth, then, I can't just say that I ever tell of him; but I suppose he goes round by Doneraile way, for he never took horses at Mallow in my time, sir."

Spenser was born in London, near the Tower, about 1553: he was of Pembroke-hall, Cambridge, where he graduated M.A. in 1576. His first publication, the "Shepherd's Calendar," appeared in 1576. In 1580, he accompanied Lord Grey de Wilton, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, as his secretary. In 1594, he married, being then in the forty-first year. This unfortunate poet arrived in England with a heart broken by misfortune, and died in an obscure lodging in King-street, Westminster, 11th January, 1599-8, in the forty-sixth year of his age. He was buried in Westminster-Abbey, when several brother poets attended, and threw copies of verses into his grave; and a monument was afterwards erected over his remains by the celebrated Anne, Countess of Dorset.

("L. E. L.")

We cannot refrain deploring, with our readers, the loss of that charming and inspired writer, Mrs. Maclean (L. E. L.). As it is our intention to give a memoir of this gifted lady in our next, we shall now merely state, that about a year since, she married Mr. George Maclean, the present governor of Cape Coast Castle, whither she accompanied him; and fell a sacrifice to the pestilential climate of Sierra Leone, on the 15th of October last, a short time after her arrival on that fatal shore.

• Letters of the North.

2. 10. 77-150.

New Books.

MEMOIRS OF CHARLES MATHEWS.*

By Mrs. Mathews.

[THESE are the first two volumes of Mr. Mathews's biography, and extend to the year 1818: two more, we presume, are intended to make the work complete. Although this rather inordinate measure may seem to imply an extent of adventure, little short of that which won the love of Desdemona, the reader must look for his gratification in something very different; and if he had the pleasure of knowing the subject of these memoirs in private or in public, he will be best pleased in proportion as he finds here reflected the memory of his past enjoyments. The biography of Charles Mathews, indeed, differed not materially from that of many in the same profession, and might have been told in a very short compass. He was born in 1776, of respectable and religious parents. His father was a bookseller in the Strand, who added to that vocation, the occasional labours of a Calvinist preacher: his mother was a member of the Church of England. Young Mathews was intended for the shop, but on quitting Merchant Tailors' School, his theatrical tendencies soon developed themselves, and accordingly we trace him, by the usual steps, up to the point at which he settles into the regular actor. There were times in his career, when darkness veiled his prospects, in which the eligibility of receding was impressed upon him, but he had made up his mind, and the event proved that he was right in treating the discouragements he met with as incident to his profession, and not consequent on his own deficiencies.]

The beginning of the work is autobiographical, and there are many letters. Mathews' character upon the whole was an estimable one. He had no serious faults that we have discovered, and thrown as he was into very miscellaneous society, it is to his credit that he kept his moral principles pure, and his conduct irreproachable. His temper is said to have been irritable, but that was mere surface. We see no evidence of the petty jealousy so common among actors; on the contrary, he seems always to have felt the merits of others, and to have been sincerely pleased to acknowledge them. The extracts we shall make will better show the character of the work than any description; there is some evidence of 'making up,' so as to make anecdotes 'tell,' but this, if it be an objection, is characteristic of all theatrical biography.]

Mathews in infancy.—For a more exact description of my person, I have referred to my nurse, who was alive to tell the tale within ten years of the date hereof. She assured me that I was a long, thin, skewer of a

child; of a restless, fidgetty temperament, and by no means regular features—quite the contrary; and as if Nature herself suspected she had not formed me in one of her happiest moments, the Fates combined with her to render me more remarkable, and finding there was not the least chance of my being a beauty, conspired to make me comical.

The agreeable twist of my would-be features was occasioned, as the above-named lady assured me,—indeed I have heard my mother with great tenderness and delicacy confirm it,—by a species of hysteric fits to which I was subject in infancy, one of which distorted my mouth and eyebrows to such a degree, as to render me almost hideous for a time; though my partial nurse declared my "eyes made up for all, they were so bright and lively." Be this as it may, certain it is, that after the recovery from this attack, folks laughed the moment they saw me, and said, "Bless the dear little dear! it is not a beauty, to be sure; but what a funny face it has!" The "off-side" of my mouth, as a coachman would say, took such an affection for my ear, that it seemed to make a perpetual struggle to form a closer communication with it; and one eyebrow became fixed as a rusty weathercock, while the other popped up an inch apparently beyond its proper position. The effects remain to this day, though moderated. "Wry-mouth" was a nickname applied to me when at school; and for the first seven years of my life, I was in the habit of holding my hand to my cheek to hide the blemish. What good or evil "was here wrapt up in countenance," or how far this may have interfered to direct my future pursuits, I do not attempt to say.

His first visit to the Theatre.—[It was an act of disobedience: he had taken advantage of his father's absence to accompany his friend Lichfield.] My companion and I have frequently laughed over the recollection of my frantic behaviour. He could not pacify me. He had long been initiated into the mysteries of the scenic art; but here was I at fourteen, at my "first play," which Charles Lamb has so beautifully described. The very curtain filled me with anticipations of delight;—the scenery, the dresses, the feathers, the russet boots, the very smell of the theatre, that mixture of orange-peel and oil, the applause in which I joined so heartily, as to bring all eyes and many remarks upon me, to the great scandal of my cicerone, filled my senses with delight. From that night my mind was in a state of spendid irritation; I could scarcely walk the streets without offering "my kingdom for a horse," to every pedestrian I met. At night I could not rest, Macbeth did "murder sleep;" and I recited Lear up three pair of stairs to a four-legged bedstead.

George Frederick Cooke.—Cooke, of whom

* Published by Bentley.

you have heard so much, has been here, (Dublin) these three weeks, and his merit has not been at all exaggerated; for I think him a most excellent actor, and one of the finest declaimers I ever heard. He came out in *Othello*, and was received with a vast deal of applause, though *Othello* was not his choice for a first appearance. He played it most delightfully, but I do not think it by any means one of his best characters. *Othello* was dressed in a modern suit of scarlet and gold, which I do not think has half so handsome an appearance with a black face as a Moorish dress. His address to the senate was spoken in a different manner from what I have heard it before, being more familiar, and indeed more natural, than the customary mode of delivering it. The more impassioned parts were wonderfully fine; nor do I think the second scene with *Iago* was ever better played. His second character was *Macbeth*, which is certainly superior to his *Othello*. He has played *Columbus*; *Ghost*, in "Hamlet;" *Friar*, in "Romeo;" *Eustace De St. Pierre*, and *Richard*, which is certainly his masterpiece. His figure and manner are much more adapted to the villain than the lover. His countenance, particularly when dressed for *Richard*, is somewhat like Kemble's, the nose and chin being very prominent features, but the face is not so long. He has a finely marked eye, and upon the whole, I think, a very fine face. His voice is extremely powerful, and he has one of the clearest rants I ever heard. The lower tones are somewhat like Holman's, but much harsher, and considerably stronger. The most striking fault in his figure are his arms, which are remarkably short, and ill-proportioned to the rest of his body, and in his walk this gives him a very ungraceful appearance. * * * I have the pleasure of living in the same house with him. He is one of the most intelligent men and agreeable companions I ever met with.

[The above critical portrait is of that sort which one feels to be a correct likeness, without having seen the original. In a subsequent letter, Cooke is again alluded to.]

I am extremely sorry to inform you that Cooke has enlisted. The regiment went to the Isle of Man about a week past. Daly (the Dublin manager, with whom he had had a quarrel,) would have been glad to re-engage him, but such was his pride, that he would rather turn soldier from real want than come to terms. If he does not get out of that situation, he certainly will be a great loss to the stage, for he is really an excellent actor. Many of the performers saw him in his military gurb when he was going off; but he seemed to wish rather to avoid speaking to them, appearing quite melancholy. He was drunk when he enlisted. [Mr. Mathews adds.] The above circum-

stance in the history of this extraordinary man is not generally known. Such was his madness at all times while under the influence of drink, that no extravagance was too great for him to commit. Mr. Mathews once witnessed a quarrel he fell into during one of his excesses, with a low man in some public place; whom he at last invited to fight. The man declined, under the pretence that Cooke insulted him because he (Cooke,) possessed more money than himself. Upon which Cooke indignantly emptied his pockets, and threw all the money he probably had in the world into the fire, exclaiming, as he resumed his boxing attitude, "Now, you vulgar scoundrel, we are upon equal terms!"

Mathews's first marriage.—In the summer of 1797, Mr. Mathews met at the house of a mutual friend, a young lady about his own age, of very prepossessing manners, and of superior mind. It was said that the "gods had made her poetical," and that she was otherwise a person of elegant attainments. These young people became very intimate; and though friendship in such cases is not believed in by people of experience, I have been assured by both of the parties that their acquaintance begun and continued upon that basis alone, for some time. One day, however, the young man, in a *tête à tête* with the interesting orphan, (for such she was,) in a pensive mood, was drawn into a hearing of her history. She was the daughter of a physician, Dr. Strong, of Exeter, who, by a concurrence of wayward events, became embarrassed, and died almost penniless, leaving his only child upon the compassion of friends. She, however, was too proud to lead a life of dependence, and settled herself in a school, instructing a limited number of young ladies from the stores acquired by her education, laid up by her parents as resources for her own happiness in the position in society she was originally intended to take. With this best dowry that a child can boast of, she was enabled to obtain some of the comforts which it was at first hoped she might enjoy, without using her mental gains for their purchase; and at this period she was labouring in her vocation, and highly esteemed by all who knew her. The story of her helpless youth, and her honourable struggles, which allowed her a bare support, made an impression upon the somewhat romantic youth. He was not in any degree heart-touched; but *pity* is confessedly akin to love, if not nearly related. He had merely called upon Miss Strong for an hour's lounge on a day of non-rehearsal, without more intention or expectation than civility and kindness created; but after an hour's stay, he left her presence as her *affiliated husband*! As he walked towards his lodging, he asked himself what could have induced the offer he had made to this amiable

girl?—and he found no answer in his heart. He was neither "in love," nor "plessed with ruin;" and yet he had plunged into the one without any of the sweet inducements of the other. Well, what was done could not be undone. He had listened to her woes, and admired her character; and in the enthusiasm of youth and the moment, he had offered to protect the young creature against further toil and care. He had settled to marry a person without sixpence, and undertaken to provide for her upon the splendid expectancy of twelve shillings per week! and this without what is called *being in love*!

That his intended wife was at that period deeply attached to him, every moment of her after-life indisputably evinced; and it is no mean praise of her husband, under the circumstances of their union, that he not only never divulged the delicate secret of his having inconsiderately and inadvertently made her the offer of his hand, but throughout her married life he treated her with every kindness and attention. Nor do I believe that, except to his second wife, (whom he *really* loved,) he ever committed the truths of his dispassionate feelings towards his devoted Eliza. [This is very well told, but there is something assumed. Mr. Mathews *might* not have been in love, and there are theories about loving twice, into which we shall not enter; but certainly he entered into the engagement, not upon the splendid expectancy of twelve shillings a-week, but upon a well-grounded expectation of rising in his profession. We shall resume our extracts in a future number.] 42

THE MURDEROUS BATTLE OF GROKOW,

BETWEEN THE POLES AND RUSSIANS.

THE battle of Grokow, the greatest in Europe since that of Waterloo, was fought on the 25th of February, 1831, and the place where I stood commanded a view of the whole ground. The Russian army was under the command of Diebitsch, and consisted of one hundred and forty thousand infantry, forty thousand cavalry, and three hundred and twelve pieces of cannon. This enormous force was arranged in two lines of combatants, and a third of reserve. * * * Against this immense army the Poles opposed less than fifty thousand men and a hundred pieces of cannon, under the command of General Skrzynecki. At break of day, the whole force of the Russian right wing, with a terrible fire of fifty pieces of artillery, and columns of infantry, charged the Polish left, with the determination of carrying it by a single and overpowering effort. The Poles, with six thousand five hundred men, and twelve pieces of artillery, not yielding a foot of ground, and knowing they could hope for

no succour, resisted this attack for several hours, until the Russians slackened their fire. About ten o'clock, the plain was suddenly covered with the Russian forces issuing from the cover of the forest, seeming one undivided mass of troops. Two hundred pieces of cannon, posted on a single line, commenced a fire which made the earth tremble, and was more terrible than the oldest officers, many of whom had fought at Marengo and Austerlitz, had ever beheld. The Russians now made an attack upon the right wing; but foiled in this, as upon the left, Diebitsch directed the strength of his army against the Forest of Elders, hoping to divide the Poles into two parts. One hundred and twenty pieces of cannon were brought to bear on this one point, and fifty battalions, incessantly pushed to the attack, kept up a scene of massacre unheard of in the annals of war. A Polish officer who was in the battle told me that the small streams which intersected the forest were so choked with dead, that the infantry marched directly over their bodies. The heroic Poles, with twelve battalions, for four hours defended the forest against the tremendous attack. Nine times they were driven out, and nine times, by a series of admirably-executed manoeuvres, they repulsed the Russians with immense loss. Batteries, now concentrated in one point, were in a moment hurried to another, and the artillery advanced to the charge like cavalry, sometimes within a hundred feet of the enemy's columns, and there opened a murderous fire of grape. At three o'clock the generals, many of whom were wounded, and most of whom had their horses shot under them, and fought on foot at the head of their divisions, resolved upon a retrograde movement, so as to draw the Russians on the open plain. Diebitsch, supposing it to be a flight, looked over to the city and exclaimed, "Well, then, it appears that, after this bloody day, I shall take tea in the Belvidere Palace." The Russian troops debouched from the forest. A cloud of Russian cavalry, with several regiments of heavy cuirassiers at their head, advanced to the attack. Colonel Pientka, who had kept up an unremitting fire from his battery for five hours, seated with perfect sang-froid upon a disabled piece of cannon, remained to give another effective fire, then left at full gallop a post which he had so long occupied under the terrible fire of the enemy's artillery. This rapid movement of his battery animated the Russian forces. The cavalry advanced on a trot upon the line of a battery of rockets. A terrible discharge was poured into their ranks, and the horses, galled to madness by the flakes of fire, became wholly ungovernable, and broke away, spreading disorder in every direction; the whole body swept helplessly along the fire of the Polish infantry, and in a few minutes was so completely annihilated,

St. Ch. C. IV. 192.

that, of a regiment of cuirassiers who bore inscribed on their helmets the "Invincibles," not a man escaped. The wreck of the routed cavalry, pursued by the lancers, carried along in its flight the columns of infantry; a general retreat commenced, and the cry of "Poland for ever" reached the walls of Warsaw to cheer the hearts of its anxious inhabitants. So terrible was the fire of that day, that in the Polish army there was not a single general or staff officer who had not his horse killed or wounded under him; two-thirds of the officers, and, perhaps, of the soldiers, had their clothes pierced with balls, and more than a tenth part of the army were wounded. Thirty thousand Russians and ten thousand Poles were left on the field of battle; rank upon rank lay prostrate on the earth, and the Forest of Elders was so strewn with bodies, that it received from that day the name of the "Forest of the dead." The Czar heard with dismay, and all Europe with astonishment, that the crosser of the Balkan had been foiled under the walls of Warsaw. All day, my companion said, the cannonading was terrible. Crowds of citizens, of both sexes, and all ages, were assembled on the spot where we stood, earnestly watching the progress of the battle, sharing in all its vicissitudes, in the highest state of excitement, as the clearing up of the columns of smoke showed when the Russians or the Poles had fled; and he described the entry of the remnant of the Polish army into Warsaw as sublime and terrible; their hair and faces were begrimed with powder and blood; their armour shattered and broken, and all, even dying men, were singing patriotic songs; and when the fourth regiment, among whom was a brother of my companion, and who had particularly distinguished themselves in the battle, crossed the bridge, and filed slowly through the streets, their lances shivered against the cuirasses of the guards, their helmets broken, their faces black and spotted with blood, some erect, some tottering, and some barely able to sustain themselves in the saddle, above the stern chorus of patriotic songs rose the distracted cries of mothers, wives, daughters, and lovers, seeking among this broken band for forms dearer than life, many of whom were then sleeping on the battle-field.—*Stephens's Travels.*

CURE OF THE WOUNDS IN CATTLE.

A PORTION of the yolk of an egg, mixed with the spirit of turpentine of Florence, will cure the most aggravated wounds of domestic animals. The part affected must be bathed several times with the mixture each day, when a perfect cure will be effected in forty-eight hours.—*Liverpool Mercury.*

The Public Journals.

JACK SHEPPARD.

[We have read, with great pleasure, the first part of Mr. Ainsworth's new romance of Jack Sheppard.* It displays much graphic truth and beautiful sentiment; told in nervous language, pleasingly delineating the mysteries of life. The following extracts are from the admirable and powerfully written tale of

The Widow and Child.

On the night of Friday, the 26th of November, 1703, and at the hour of eleven, the door of a miserable tenement, situated in an obscure quarter of the Borough of Southwark, known as the Old Mint, was opened; and a man, with a lantern in his hand, appeared at the threshold. This person, whose age might be about forty, had something of the air of a mechanic, though he, also, looked like one well-to-do in the world. In stature he was short and stumpy; in person corpulent; and in countenance, (so far as it could be discerned,) sleek, snub-nosed, and demure.

Immediately behind the individual answering to the above description stood a pale, poverty-stricken woman, whose forlorn aspect contrasted strongly with the man's plump and comfortable physiognomy. Dressed in a tattered black stuff gown, discoloured by various stains, and intended, it would seem, from the remnants of rusty crape with which it was here and there tricked out, to represent the garb of widowhood—this pitiable creature held in her arms a sleeping infant, swathed in the folds of a linsey-woolsey shawl.

"Well, good night, Mr. Wood," said she, in the deep, hoarse accents of consumption; "and may God Almighty bless and reward you for your kindness! You were always the best of masters to my poor husband; and now you've proved the best of friends to his widow and orphan boy."

"Poh! poh! say no more about it," rejoined the man hastily. "I've done no more than my duty, Mrs. Sheppard, and neither deserve, nor desire your thanks. And such slight relief as I can afford should have been offered earlier, if I'd known where you'd taken refuge after your unfortunate husband's—"

"Execution, you would say, sir," added Mrs. Sheppard, with a deep sigh, perceiving that her benefactor hesitated to pronounce the word. "You show more consideration to the feelings of a hempen widow, than there is any need to show. I'm used to insult as I am to misfortune, and am grown callous to both; but I'm *not* used to compassion, and know not how to take it. My

* In Bentley's Miscellany. No. 25.

heart would speak if it could, for it is very full. There was a time, long, long ago, when the tears would have rushed to my eyes unbidden at the bare mention of generosity like yours, Mr. Wood; but they never come now. I have never wept since that day."

"And I trust you will never have occasion to weep again, my poor soul," replied Wood, setting down his lantern, and brushing a few drops from his eyes, "unless it be tears of joy. Pshaw!" added he, making an effort to subdue his emotion, "I can't leave you in this way. I must stay a minute longer, if only to see you smile."

So saying, he re-entered the house, closed the door, and, followed by the widow, proceeded to the fire-place, where a handful of chips, apparently just lighted, crackled within the rusty grate.

"You've but a sorry lodging, Mrs. Sheppard," said Wood, glancing round the chamber, as he expanded his palms before the scanty flame.

"It's wretched enough, indeed, sir," rejoined the widow; "but, poor as it is, it's better than the cold stones and open streets."

"Of course—of course," returned Wood, hastily; "anything's better than that. But, take a drop of wine," urged he, filling a drinking-horn, and presenting it to her; "it's choice canary, and 'll do you good. And now, come and sit by me, my dear, and let's have a little quiet chat together. When things are at the worst they'll mend. Take my word for it, your troubles are over."

"I hope they are, sir," answered Mrs. Sheppard, with a faint smile and a doubtful shake of the head, as Wood drew her to a seat beside him, "for I've had my full share of misery. But I don't look for peace on this side the grave."

"Nonsense!" cried Wood: "while there's life there's hope. Never be down-hearted. Besides," added he, opening the shawl in which the infant was wrapped, and throwing the light of the candle full upon its sickly but placid features, "it's sinful to repine while you've a child like this to comfort you. Lord help him! he's the very image of his father. Like carpenter, like chips."

"That likeness is the chief cause of my misery," replied the widow, shuddering. "Were it not for that, he would indeed be a blessing and a comfort to me. He never cries nor frets, as children generally do, but lies at my bosom, or on my knee, as quiet and as gentle as you see him now. But, when I look upon his innocent face, and see how like he is to his father,—when I think of that father's shameful ending, and recollect how free from guilt *he* once was,—at such times, Mr. Wood, despair will

come over me; and, dear as this babe is to me, far dearer than my own wretched life, which I would lay down for him any minute, I have prayed to heaven to remove him, rather than he should grow up to be a man, and be exposed to his father's temptations—rather than he should live as wickedly and die as disgracefully as his father. And, when I have seen him pining away before my eyes, getting thinner and thinner every day, I have sometimes thought my prayers were heard."

"Marriage and hanging go by destiny," observed Wood, after a pause; "but I trust your child is reserved for a better fate than either, Mrs. Sheppard."

"Goodness only knows what he's reserved for," rejoined the widow in a desponding tone; "but if Mynheer Van Galgebok, whom I met last night at the Cross Shovel, spoke the truth, little Jack will never die in his bed."

"Save us!" exclaimed Wood. "And who is this Van Gal—Gal—what's his outlandish name?"

"Van Galgebok," replied the widow. "He's the famous Dutch conjurer who foretold King William's accident and death, last February but one, a month before either event happened, and gave out that another prince over the water would soon enjoy his own again; for which he was committed to Newgate, and whipped at the cart's tail. He went by another name then,—Rykhart Scherprechter I think he called himself. His fellow-prisoners nicknamed him the gal-lows-provider, from a habit he had of picking out all those who were destined to the gibbet. He was never known to err, and was as much dreaded as the gaol-fever in consequence. He singled out my poor husband from a crowd of other felons; and you know how right he was in that case, sir."

"Ay, marry," replied Wood, with a look that seemed to say that he did not think it required any surprising skill in the art of divination to predict the doom of the individual in question; but whatever opinion he might entertain, he contented himself with inquiring into the grounds of the conjurer's evil augury respecting the infant. "What did the old fellow judge from, eh, Joann?" asked he.

"From a black mole under the child's right ear, shaped like a coffin, which is a bad sign; and a deep line just above the middle of the left thumb, meeting round about in the form of a noose, which is a worse," replied Mrs. Sheppard.

"You may see the marks on the child yourself, if you choose, sir," urged the widow.

"See the devil!—not I," cried Wood impatiently. "I didn't think you'd been so easily fooled, Joann."

"Fooled or not," returned Mrs. Sheppard mysteriously, "old Van told me *one* thing which has come true already."

"What's that?" asked Wood with some curiosity.

"He said, by way of comfort, I suppose, after the fright he gave me at first, that the child would find a friend, within twenty-four hours, who would stand by him through life."

"A friend is not so soon gained as lost," replied Wood; "but how has the prediction been fulfilled, Joann, eh?"

"I thought you would have guessed, sir," replied the widow, timidly.

"Well, my dear, I've a proposal to make in regard to this baby of yours, which may, or may not, be agreeable. All I can say is, it's well meant; and I may add, I'd have made it five minutes ago, if you'd given me the opportunity."

"Pray come to the point, sir," said Mrs. Sheppard, somewhat alarmed by this preamble.

"I am coming to the point, Joann. The more haste, the worse speed—better the feet slip than the tongue. However, to cut a long matter short, my proposal's this:—I've taken a fancy to your bantling; and, as I've no son of my own, if it meets with your concurrence and that of Mrs. Wood, (for I never do any thing without consulting my better half,) I'll take the boy, educate him, and bring him up to my own business of a carpenter."

The poor widow hung her head, and pressed her child closer to her breast.

"Well, Joann," said the benevolent mechanic, after he had looked at her stedfastly for a few moments, "what say you?—silence gives consent, eh?"

Mrs. Sheppard made an effort to speak, but her voice was choked by emotion.

"Shall I take the baby home with me?" persisted Wood, in a tone between jest and earnest.

"I cannot part with him," replied the widow, bursting into tears; indeed, indeed, I cannot."

"So, I've found out the way to move her," thought the carpenter; "those tears will do her some good, at all events. Not part with him!" added he aloud. "Why, you wouldn't stand in the way of his good fortune, surely? I'll be a second father to him, I tell you. Remember what the conjurer said."

"I do remember it, sir," replied Mrs. Sheppard, "and am most grateful for your offer. But I dare not accept it."

"Dare not!" echoed the carpenter; "I don't understand you, Joann."

"I mean to say, sir," answered Mrs. Sheppard in a troubled voice, "that if I lost my child, I should lose all I have left in the world. I have neither father, mother, brother, sister, nor husband—I have only *him*."

"Give me till to-morrow," implored she, "and if I can bring myself to part with him, you shall have him without another word."

"I don't think he would leave me, even if I could part with him," observed Mrs. Sheppard, smiling through her tears.

"I don't think he would," acquiesced the carpenter. "No friend like the mother, for the baby knows no other."

"And that's true," rejoined Mrs. Sheppard; for if I had *not* been a mother, I would not have survived the day on which I became a widow."

"You mustn't think of that, Mrs. Sheppard," said Wood, in a soothing tone.

"I can't help thinking of it, sir," answered the widow. "I can never get poor Tom's last look out of my head, as he stood in the Stone-Hall at Newgate, after his irons had been knocked off, unless I manage to stupify myself somehow. The dismal tolling of Saint Sepulchre's bell is for ever ringing in my ears—oh!"

"If that's the case," observed Wood, "I'm surprised you should like to have such a frightful picture constantly in view as that over the chimney-piece."

"I'd good reasons for placing it there, sir; but don't question me about them now, or you'll drive me mad," returned Mrs. Sheppard wildly.

"Well, well, we'll say no more about it," replied Wood; "and, by way of changing the subject, let me advise you on no account to fly to strong waters for consolation, Joann. One nail drives out another, it's true; but the worst nail you can employ is a coffin-nail. Gin Lane's the nearest road to the churchyard."

"It may be; but if it shortens the distance, and lightens the journey, I care not," retorted the widow, who seemed by this reproach to be roused into sudden eloquence.

"To those who, like me, have never been able to get out of the dark and dreary paths of life, the grave is indeed a refuge, and the sooner they reach it the better. The spirit I drink may be poison,—it may kill me,—perhaps it *is* killing me:—but so would hunger, cold, misery,—so would my own thoughts. I should have gone mad without it. Gin is the poor man's friend,—his sole set-off against the rich man's luxury. It comforts him when he is most forlorn. It may be treacherous, it may lay up a store of future woe; but it insures present happiness, and that is sufficient. When I have traversed the streets a houseless wanderer, driven with curses from every door where I have solicited alms, and with blows from every gate-way where I have sought shelter,—when I have crept into some deserted building, and stretched my wearied limbs upon a bulk, in the vain hope of repose,—or worse than all, when, frenzied with want, I have yielded to horrible temptation, and earned a meal in the only way I

could earn one,—when I have felt, at times like these, my heart sink within me, I have drank of this drink, and have at once forgotten my cares, my poverty, my guilt. Old thoughts, old feelings, old faces, and old scenes, have returned to me, and I have fancied myself happy,—as happy as I am now." And she burst into a wild hysterical laugh.

"Poor creature!" ejaculated Wood. "Do you call this frantic glee happiness?"

"It's all the happiness I have known for years," returned the widow, becoming suddenly calm, "and it's short-lived enough, as you perceive. I tell you what, Mr. Wood," added she in a hollow voice, and with a ghastly look, "gin may bring ruin; but as long as poverty, vice, and ill-usage exist, it will be drunk!"

"God forbid!" exclaimed Wood fervently; and, as if afraid of prolonging the interview, he added, with some precipitation, "But I must be going: I've stayed here too long already. You shall hear from me to-morrow."

The Gatherer.

Curran's Description of a speech made by Sergeant Hewitt.—The learned Sergeant's speech put me exactly in mind of a familiar utensil in domestic use, commonly called an *extinguisher*:—it began at a point, and on it went, widening and widening, until at last it fairly put the question out altogether.

Spartan Oath.—The following is a curious specimen of the laconic manner in which state business was despatched amongst the Spartans (translated from the Latin):—"We that are as good as you, constitute you our king, and if you defend our liberties, we will defend you; if not, not."

An Irish gentleman, who certainly preserved most patriotically all the richness of his original pronunciation, had visited Cheltenham, and during his stay there acquired a most extraordinary habit of perpetually lolling his tongue out of his mouth!—"What can he mean by it?" said somebody to Curran.—"Mean by it," said Curran, "why, he means if he can, to catch the English accent."

An observer has made the calculation, that there are in France 1,700,843 doctors, and that there are about 1,400,651 patients. On the other hand there are 1,900,403 lawyers, and 998,000 clients only. So that if the odd 902,403 lawyers do not fall ill with grief and disappointment, 900,192 doctors will have to "stand at ease." H. M.

He who cheats the man that confides in him, in a witty manner, may make us laugh at his jests, and half disarm our anger; but reflection soon insures him our contempt and indignation.—*Fry.*

Sterne says, positiveness is a most absurd foible; for if in the right, it lessens our victory; if in the wrong, it adds shame to our defeat.

One night an order of Mr. Sheridan's was stopped at the box door of Drury-Lane Theatre, and pronounced a forgery, because the door-keeper could read it!—*Mathews.*

Public Benefactors.—Every one can and should do something for the public, if it be only to kick a piece of orange-peel into the road from the foot-pavement.

A fisherman of Valery-sur-Somme lately caught in his nets one of those strange fishes called syrens. The head and the breasts bear a striking affinity to those parts in the human frame; and when the creature stands in the water at half length, it really looks like a woman. It has been dispatched to the Museum of Natural History, and will, it is hoped, reach its destination alive.

H. M.

Terrible effects of Cannibalism.—At the Haihunga, where many hundred families assembled, I requested Kāhika, from a feeling of curiosity, to point out to me a single family whose relatives had all died natural deaths; but he stated he could not even allude to a party who had not a melancholy tale of cannibalism to relate, whereby their friends had suffered, or who had not also partaken of the blood of their enemies; and added, but for the frequent fires that take place in villages, and consequent destruction of so many of the native antiquities, scarce a family existed in the country that would not possess at least the bone of an enemy, worked up either as a whistle or a bracelet, ear-ornament or fish-hook.—*Polack's New Zealand.*

Obstinacy of a New Zealand Chief.—I had at one time a fowling-piece by me, that had not been cleaned or discharged for six weeks previously. A silly servant, in my absence, had put an additional charge within it; Kāwika, an elderly chief, saw me take up the piece, intending to extract the charges, and have it cleaned, but he entreated hard that I would let him discharge it. In vain I told him how long since it had been loaded; he was obdurate, neither would he allow me to extract a single charge; as he had possession of it, it was in vain to contest the point; he fired, the gun kicked, as it is technically termed, and knocked him down. He arose bleeding, "twas from the nose," and demanded payment for his hurt, and the bad conduct of my piece. I gave him the price, viz., a head of tobacco.—*Ibid.*

LONDON: Printed and published by J. LIMBIRD, 143, Strand, (near Somerset House); and sold by all Booksellers and Newsmen.—In PARIS, by all the Booksellers.—In FRANKFORT, CHARLES JUGEL.